

Christian, tinge and modification, (rendered perceptible partly by a plain recognition occasionally of some great Christian truth, and partly by a solicitous, though it were a tacit, conformity to every principle of the Christian theory,) which should pervade universally the sentiments regarding man as a moral being. Consider how small a portion of the serious subjects of thought can be detached from all connexion with the religion of Christ, without narrowing the scope to which he meant it to extend, and repelling its intervention where he required it should intervene. The book which unfolds it, has exaggerated its comprehensiveness, and the first distinguished Christians had a delusive view of it, if it does not actually claim to mingle its principles with the whole system of moral ideas, so as to give them a special modification; as the principle of fire, interfused through the various forms and combinations of the elements, contributes essentially to constitute that condition by which they are adapted to their important uses, which condition and adaptation therefore they would lose if that principle were no longer inherent.

And this claim for the extensive interference of the Christian principles, made as a requirement from authority, appears to be just in virtue of their own nature. For they are not of a nature which necessarily restricts them to a peculiar department, like the principles appropriate to some of the sciences. We should at once perceive the absurdity of a man who should be pretending to adjust all his ideas on general subjects according to the rules of geometry, and should maintain (if any man could do so preposterous a thing) that geometrical laws ought to be taken as the basis of our reasoning on politics and morals. Or, if this be too extreme a supposition, let any other class of principles, foreign to moral subjects, be selected, in order to show how absurd is the effect of an attempt to stretch them beyond their proper sphere, and force them into some connexion with ideas with which they have no natural relation. Let it be shown how such principles can in no degree modify the subject to which they are attempted to be applied, nor mingle with the reasons concerning it, but refuse to touch it, like magnetism applied to brass. I would then show, on the contrary, that the Christian principles are of a quality which puts them in relation with something in the nature of almost all serious